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Question Time: Immortality through computers?

Would you transfer your consciousness to a machine?

By Rob Burgess
Tribune night editor

The 2045 Initiative, founded by Russian entrepreneur Dmitry Itskov in February 2011, "aims to create technologies enabling the transfer of a individual's personality to a more advanced non-biological carrier, and extending life, including to the point of immortality."

So, we wanted to know: "If it were possible, would you transfer your consciousness to a computer? Why or why not?"

Your answers

"No, no, no!!! What happens to my soul? A bunch of soul-less megatrons inhabiting the earth?!" — **Susan Hayes**

"Yes, yes, yes!!! I would be Optimus Prime! Seriously though, I feel that *I* would cease to exist, and what would remain is the impression of me that exists in the copy. So, I would do it as it would allow me (as I currently exist) to continue to provide for my family, even if *I* am not there to 'exist'." — **Sean Spicer**

“Yes, because Tron. And Captain N.” — **Joe Bolinger**

“No, because there is no way I am reading a user agreement that long beforehand.” — **Alan Birkemeier**

Our answers

“No I would not, in fear of my mechanical body getting hacked. But in seriousness I wouldn’t for the simple fact that pushing our bodies and our minds and the things that we can do to the limits is what I think really makes humanity great. We always strive to do better and I would hate to have that dampened by mechanical minds and bodies. Plus what really would one do with immortality?” — **Nathan Harvey**

“Oops. I deleted grandpa.” — **Steve Mullen**

“It would be a duplicate, not yours. Your consciousness isn't going along for the ride. Doesn't seem worth the reward if a duplicate enjoys the ride and the original you doesn't.” — **Pedro Velazco**

“Science of this kind is all about our ability to do something, not whether we should or not. Who is going to be the first one to volunteer for this kind of thing? Certainly not me. Are we even sure you’re going to experience this immortality, or will it just be your facsimile? And even if you are able to make the leap, why are we so sure this is going to be so great? I have problems with ads playing at me from websites on computers I use now.

Imagine if you were actually in the computer. And who wants physical immortality anyway? Death is a part of life. Remove that and you're just asking for trouble." — **Rob Burgess**

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